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efficient type of experience; and that the higher the degree of abstraction of which thought is capable, the richer the possibility of the experience in which it functions. But pragmatism does teach that whatever heights or depths of abstraction thought reaches, it can not finally cut loose from the world of immediate impulse, instinct and feeling, and set up an independent, self-enclosed empire of pure intellect.

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SOCIETIES

A REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF PSYCHOLOGY IN NORMAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

A MEETING of the North Central Association of Teachers of Psychology in Normal Schools and Colleges, was held at the University of Chicago, April 3, 1909. The sessions were held in Emmons Blaine Hall, the School of Education. About forty teachers of psychology from normal schools and colleges in seven of the North Central States were in attendance.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

A Way of Simplifying the Introductory Course in Psychology: ROWLAND HAYNES.

The purpose of the introductory course is the formation in the student of habits of observation, explanation, and application to daily life of the facts observed. Hence the course may be simplified by grouping around the topics of description of consciousness, states and processes, explanation and function for present adult life. In the study of explanation the student should come to see that an explanation is the pointing out of the relation of invariable antecedent to consequent between the group of facts to be explained and certain other groups of facts. Hence the course may be further simplified by arranging the favorite groups of facts to which psychology goes in explanation thus: (1) Psychological facts of other conscious states and processes, (2) physiological facts of the make-up and growth of the nervous system, (3) facts of child life, (4) facts of race history, etc. This indicates the use to be made of the functional view of consciousness in explanation. Pointing out the need for adjustment or the value of certain processes for adjustment, gives no explanation. It is necessary to point out the invariable

antecedents in the situations in race, or individual history which caused the adjustment.

Teaching the Organic Conception in an Introductory Course: J. B. MINER.

The paper called attention to the inadequate summaries of the organic conception of the mind to be found even in text-books which emphasize the functional and genetic points of view. The writer suggested that the difficulty which the students have in grasping the organic conception when applied to the mind might be partially overcome by paying more attention to a carefully summarized description of the organic nature of consciousness. He set forth, by way of illustration, the four features which he had used in defining the conception and the examples of mental facts which he had found most serviceable under each. The characteristics were the following: First, that the mind is made up of processes, each of which has its specific purpose in adapting the organism to its environment; second, that these functions are mutually dependent and organized into unified conduct; third, that the mind develops during the individual life; fourth, that the mind through inheritance is related to the past activities of the race. It was further suggested that it might be wise to point out the striking difference between the mind and physical organisms in that consciousness does not have a continuous observable existence. This makes it desirable to describe man scientifically as a psychophysical organism, and speak of the organic nature of the mind rather than of the mental organism. The writer suggested that he had found that this summary might well be introduced late in the course, for example, after the treatment of the cognitive functions.

A Device—By which Physiological Concepts may be Employed in Teaching Psychological Processes: N. A. HARVEY.

Every mental process is accompanied by a corresponding physiological change. This change always, or nearly always, takes the form of the transmission of a nervous impulse through a nervous arc. This nervous impulse may be discussed in terms of a current. Every current, whether it be a current of water, of electricity, or a nervous current, has certain elements that make it a current. In every current there must be a conductor, some means of insulation; the current always encounters resistance, it is directed in its course by some means, it exercises some kind of an influence upon the surrounding space, it is caused to flow by some kind of a force, and it is capable of doing some kind of work. In the case of the nervous current we shall be able to identify every element of the current with its psychological concomitant.

As there is one word, current, to express all the physiological elements discoverable in the nervous impulse, so we may employ a single word, psychon, to express all the concomitants of the physiological current elements. It is preferable to use a new word, to express this new idea, rather than to use the term "states of consciousness," or "consciousness," or "stream of consciousness," or "mind." It is believed that every relation that psychology has yet discovered between the various mental processes can be described in terms of the psychon, or in terms of their physiological concomitants.

It is impossible from the very nature of the case to prove directly the propositions here advanced, and it is probable that what actually occurs is a hundred times as complex as what has been indicated here. But the value of an hypothesis does not depend upon the possibility of demonstrating its truth. It enables us to picture in luminous terms the relation existing between mental processes.

Conflicting Ideals in the Teaching of Psychology: JAMES R. ANGELL.

(This paper will be published in the *Educational Bi-Monthly*.)

A Written Recitation and a Class Experiment: C. E. SEASHORE.

An explanation was given of a method of conducting a written recitation by which large classes may be handled. "There are," Professor Seashore stated, "at least three advantages in this mode of recitation; it encourages and secures systematic analysis of the text by the student when he is at ease in his room; it leaves the class-hour for lectures, demonstration, experiments, and discussion; it secures full and specific recitation from every student every day, and develops logical presentation." He then described a form of class experiment which complies with the following principles: "(1) Every individual student shall take active and responsible part in the experiment; (2) the experiment shall be sufficiently intensive to make it vital, and (3) each step in the experiment shall be explained and interpreted in a printed leaflet."

It was recommended that psychologists cooperate in producing a series of such experiments, each to be printed separately in sixteen-page leaflet edited by a representative committee. An illustration of such an experiment was given.

Relearning a Skillful Act: An Experimental Study in Neuro-Muscular Memory: EDGAR JAMES SWIFT.

The experiment consisted in relearning the muscular feat of keeping two balls going with one hand, catching one and tossing it while the other was in the air. The original investigation, in which the skill was first acquired, was completed six years before this memory study was undertaken. It was found that the subject had lost a large part of his former skill, but the process of relearning was

rapid, requiring only eleven days against forty-two in the regular learning practice six years previously. Educational applications were suggested.

The Value of Social Psychology: ERNEST TALBERT.

An adequate social psychology must proceed from the analysis of fundamental instincts, "dispositions" and sentiments, showing how they work out in the life of groups. Our prevalent procedure, with over-emphasis upon cognition, exaggeration of the possibilities of laboratory experiment, the ignoring of the place of feeling, and an individualistic attitude, has not been altogether satisfactory, and the failure of analysis and application shows itself in a crude pleasure-pain political economy, individualistic political and legal theory, and considerable chaos in educational practice.

For college students the study of social psychology has some points of advantage over the conventional treatment of individual psychology. A discussion of public opinion, instincts and their working, suggestibility, the mob, custom, conventionality, the imitation cycle theory, etc., with reference to and criticism of such representative writers as Wundt, Tarde, Baldwin, Ross, and McDougall, seems to give much of the introspective practice of the "pure" psychology, combined with a measure of objectivity and an appreciation of the relation of the individual to the group. With its group-background it gives greater significance to the individualizing forces, creates a sense of the importance of the educational process as the technique of carrying over the psychical inheritance from generation to generation, and, as regards religious implications, acts as an antidote to a worship of the group excesses peculiar to "revivals."

It is not a thoroughgoing statement to say that we must *now* proceed to the stage of application of our psychological technique. There has always been some application: the problem is to determine in what directions the use shall be put. In so far as we do apply its findings, psychology is reconstructed in content and standards. The need is to enlarge the scope of its reaction upon social life.

A Course in Applied Psychology for Teachers: FRANK G. BRUNER.

The experience of those associated with teachers in an administrative and professional way has led to the conviction that the stock courses in psychology, those which treat of it in a systematic, analytic or genetic way, have been, in general, strikingly barren of practical results. What teachers require is a more detailed study of certain mental processes involved in the acquisition of the ordinary schoolroom arts. And this study, too, needs to be pursued from the

view-point of the child's mental processes rather than from those of the adult.

In keeping with this point of view, there was then outlined a course in applied psychology which the writer projected and had pursued with some teachers in the Chicago public schools. The course consisted of a discussion and elaboration of data which the teachers collected in their own schoolrooms as a result of directed observations and experimentations, with reference to the ways in which children learn to read, grow into a number consciousness, can acquire accurate spelling habits most effectively, etc. These observations and experimentations were supplemented by readings and reports of published experimental results on the topics in question. The significant outcome of the course was this—that as a result of noting the seeming antagonism between the teacher's introspective method of getting results, and the child's observed method, there was generated a truer and more systematic teaching insight and intuition.

Social Psychology: CHARLES H. JUDD.

Psychology has reached the stage of applications. Its earlier work was the development of methods and the collection of material. The most fruitful line of application which can be developed at the present time is that which makes psychology the explanatory basis of the social sciences. Illustrations of the possibility of thus utilizing psychological material were given in full by taking up such problems from political economy as the history of credit. The earliest stages of barter are due to the fact that primitive man is purely perceptual in his intellectual process. Later he developed more and more elaborate systems of ideas which have their corresponding social institutions in our modern type of credit.

The use of tools is a second line of mental development which can be clearly traced. The earliest tools were made in a purely imitative way because the range of comprehension of primitive man was limited. As the ability to concentrate attention upon material and upon principles of construction grew, the complexity of the tool also increased and a complexity of the process of manipulation reached the stage which appears in modern industrial life.

The recognition of such explanations of human civilization as are suggested by the two examples above given, make it clear that a principle of evolution different from that of the biological sciences is necessary to account for human progress. The higher forms of intelligence are distinct factors in the forms of evolution. The ability to have ideas and to enlarge upon them is a distinctive human trait which the animals do not possess. The recognition of an intellectual type of evolution gives to educational practise a larger foundation than that which it can derive from any purely biological theory of evolution.

THE SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION.